Ripped from the ROUNDUP

Ripped straight from the pages of old Space News Roundups, here's what happened at JSC this week in:

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Tests to establish the cause of the parachute failure during Apollo 15 recovery were concluded last week.

Cause of the failure has been narrowed to two items. They are the fuel dump, which expelled about six pounds of monomethyl hydrazine (MMH) from the command module reaction control system, and the links connecting suspension lines to the risers, which are fabric straps attached to the spacecraft.

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Four in-depth telemetry tutorials organized by Dr. Matthew Quinn of the Projects Support Office, GDSD, will be part of the Instrument Society of America's ISA-76 Conference and Exhibit, Oct. 11-14 at the Astrohall. Two sessions of "Telemetry Updates" featuring four speakers covering basic concepts and reporting on the state-of-the-art in instrumentation will be held on Wednesday, Oct. 13.

What looked like another bumper pecan crop through spring and early summer has been wiped out at the JSC grove by fickle Mother Nature in the drought of July and August. When the pecans began to drop, Grounds Maintenance Supervisor Art Booth contacted local horticulturists and pecan growers to determine why.

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Users of expert systems from across the country gathered at the Gilruth Center this week to discuss CLIPS, the JSC-developed tool that has become one of NASA's most versatile software exports to the computer world.

More than 100 people attended the second annual CLIPS Users Group Conference Monday through Wednesday, learning about the various applications for the tool that allows users of almost any computer to develop their own expert systems.

Expert systems are computer programs that emulate human expertise, using a set of rules or objects to help their users make decisions rather than just performing tasks step-by-step.

ISS Payloads office supports first major NASA research aboard ISS

Expedition Two successfully executed the first major NASA research aboard the International Space Station. During Increment 2, the ISS Payload Office supported payload manifesting, integration and management of requirements.

Eighteen scientific investigations were conducted, sponsored by Human Life Sciences, Micro-gravity, Fundamental Biology the Office of Space Flight (Code M) and Space Products Development (commercial payloads).

The first three facility-class racks were also launched and activated this Increment 2: The Human Research Facility Rack 1, EXPRESS Rack 1 and EXPRESS Rack 2. EXPRESS Racks are standardized payload racks that transport, store and support experiments on the station.

The majority of payload objectives were completed, in part due to the outstanding effort of the Expedition Two crew to complete time-lined and task list activities, and also in part by the hard work by the Payload ground support at JSC and other remote sites.

In total, flights 5A.1, 6A and 7A delivered 5,500 pounds (2,500 kg) of payload hardware to the ISS. ■

Above are members of the ISS Payloads Office. This Office supported payload manifesting, integration and management of requirements during Increment 2 as Expedition 2 successfully executed the first major NASA research aboard the International Space Station. Front row (L to R): Jana Schultz, Jim Scheib, Jack Gavalas, Jason Morrow, Rich Golick, Heather Lawson, JoEllen Riley and Stephanne Thomas. Middle row (L to R): Rick Nygren, Ines Poates, John Uri, Alida Andrews, Craig Schafer, Dean Eppler and Diane McMahon. Back row (L to R): Dave Voss, Welby Redwine, Kristen Rodda, Ven Feng, Cleo Bay, Mick Culp and John Selmarten.

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Texas Aerospace Scholars use ingenuity

participating in the program. The educators enjoyed their week with their young protégés, but they also learned valuable lessons too.

"One thing that's been a central thing for me is the concept of teamwork," said Creighton Wilson, a physics teacher from Jasper. "They taught me that people working together can accomplish amazing things.

"It's a good program, I guarantee you."

Recognizing those who make TAS a success

Thanks to the generosity of the Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo (HLS&R) and the Rotary National Achievement Space Award (RNASA), an additional 50 high school juniors from across Texas were guaranteed the opportunity to participate in TAS. The on-site workshops are offered to students after they complete distance-learning assignments from the TAS curriculum.

TAS curriculum is designed to highlight the opportunities that a career in science and engineering has to offer. The program, a successful joint venture between the State of Texas and JSC, welcomed the additional funds and was able to increase the number of participants this year.

Both RNASA and the HLS&R made $25,000 contributions as part of their ongoing commitment to the youth of Texas. Their partnership with JSC has made an impact on the number of students that have been able to participate in TAS. P. Michael Wells, President of the HLS&R said: "The Rodeo is not only about cattle. We are about benefiting youth and supporting education through special grants and programs like TAS."

JSC hosts Export Control Summit on Aug. 22

By Leon Blum

The first International Space Station (ISS) Export Control Summit took place at JSC's Gilruth Recreation Center on Aug. 22. This was part of a continuing effort to train and educate contractors and civil servants about the Export Control Program.

The summit was organized by the Export Services Team and headed by JSC Export Administrator Jennifer Mason-Korecki.

The daylong event focused on how NASA Centers are handling export control issues involving the ISS. ISS hardware and software require special attention because of the large number of international partners and the numerous items that are all subject to the scrutiny of Export Control Regulations.

In attendance were Export Control Representatives (ECRs) and interested personnel from Johnson, Marshall and Kennedy Space Centers, Ames Research Center and the contractor community. Attendees took the opportunity to learn more about the history of ISS exports and how they are handled and classified.

Many topics were covered, such as revisions to the ISS Export Control Plan, proper record keeping for International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR), Export Administration Regulations (EAR) and NASA requirements.

The ITAR and EAR are the primary regulations controlling exported items produced by NASA. Jennifer Rhatigan's briefing on the ISS Payload Policy explained the requirements of getting hardware for payloads classified. The discussions gave participants greater confidence in handling items destined for export.

"Knowledge about the process of handling exports, and the rules and regulations helps the organization," Mason-Korecki said. "They can save time navigating the export process. Following the rules helps the Center avoid problems that are discovered after items are shipped, which can be costly and are always time consuming to resolve."

The day before, those in attendance went on a tour of JSC focusing on areas where export control issues commonly arise. Areas included the Mission Control Center, ISS simulators and the Neutral Buoyancy Lab.

Interactive demonstrations helped attendees better understand how to deal with export control issues. Participants split into working groups to resolve the simulated export control issue. Working with a JSC facilitator, the groups worked through the export control issues to properly classify hardware and identify potential issues.

"This interactive class activity was set up to be highly informative for the group," said Martin Maier, Program Manager for Anteon Corporation. "I'm convinced that it provided a useful forum for discussion of both technical and process issues, which will benefit NASA."

Representatives from other centers and contractors had time to share their experiences, ISS export issues and approved practices. Each representative gave their perspective of the Export Control Process and what they saw as the best methods for resolving and avoiding problems. Their presentations led to additional discussion about process improvement by all the attendees.

Following the Summit, the participants attended a reception in the Gilruth Ballroom during which several ECRs received award for their hard work on behalf of the Export Control Program.

Recipients of the "Going the Extra Mile" Awards included:

Office of the Chief Information Officer
Johnny Cools

Office of the Chief Information Officer
Neil Woodbury

Systems Division
Harry Clancy

Logistics Division
Sandy Ogden

Management Integration Office
Mike Corbin

Management Integration Officer
James Rush

International Partners Office
Kim Doering

International Partners Office
Amy Stencil

Avionics and Software Office
Dennis Stone

Program Integration Office
Earl Tiedt